

Announcement:

NCI Increases Support for Pancreatic Cancer Related Research

What are the public health implications of Pancreatic Cancer?

- An estimated 29,200 Americans will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2001
- Most people with pancreatic cancer die within six months
- Pancreatic Cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer death in the U.S.

What advances would most enhance the field of Pancreatic Cancer?

- Improve the health of the field
- Strengthen our understanding of the biology
- Determine risk factors, develop preventive strategies, and improve detection
- Improve the impact of therapy
- Advance health services research
- Create a scientific toolkit

How has NCI addressed the challenges to Pancreatic Cancer research?

- NCI established the Pancreatic Cancer Progress Review Group (PRG), a panel of pancreatic cancer experts from various disciplines, advocates and industry representatives who identified areas of research that will expedite progress against the disease.
- The PRG described and explained its recommendations in a report, "[Pancreatic Cancer: An Agenda for Action](#)," which is available online.
- During an Implementation Meeting, NCI engaged the PRG members in a dialog to identify the most compelling gaps in Pancreatic Cancer research

Based on these actions, NCI announces the following 10 steps to increase support for research on this disease. (As always, NCI's ability to implement these steps will depend on its budget for FY2002.)

1. **Pay Line:** Beginning in FY 2002, the pay line for pancreatic cancer-relevant research will be 50 percent higher than the overall pay line for NCI research grants. Only those applications that are 100 percent relevant to pancreatic cancer will be eligible for the higher pay line. To mark an application for consideration, an investigator should cite the PRG Report and include the following language in the Background section of the grant application: *The research described in this application is 100 percent relevant to pancreatic cancer.*
2. **[Specialized Programs of Research Excellence \(SPOREs\)](#):**
 - a. NCI will fund at least three meritorious, peer reviewed pancreatic cancer-specific SPOREs next year.
 - b. As in the early development of the prostate cancer SPOREs, NCI may loosen human endpoint requirements in pancreatic cancer SPORE research projects until the field of translational research in pancreatic cancer matures.
 - c. New pancreatic SPOREs will be encouraged to develop expanded human tissue collections beyond their institutional boundaries. NCI may allow

- SPOREs to exceed the current budget cap to develop expanded tissue collections, banking activities, and data from high-risk individuals.
- d. **Pancreatic SPOREs** should use developmental funds to explore new scientific opportunities and to encourage new and established investigators to develop their skills in pancreatic cancer research.
 - e. NCI may require all new gastrointestinal SPOREs to include at least one pancreatic cancer project.
3. **Mouse Models:** The NCI will provide supplements to investigators within the [Mouse Models Consortium](#) for the development of pancreatic cancer models.
 4. **Other Models:** The NCI will evaluate the need for supplements to develop alternative models of pancreatic cancer that are complementary to mouse models.
 5. **Tissue Samples:** In conjunction with the advisory committee for the [Cooperative Human Tissue Network \(CHTN\)](#), the NCI will explore the feasibility of providing greater access to pancreatic tissue samples.
 6. **Patient Samples and Data:** The NCI will explore the feasibility of providing “ultra rapid access” to samples and questionnaires from pancreatic cancer patients, and it will address the need for uniform data collection instruments and tissue sampling protocols.
 7. **Markers for Early Detection:** The [Early Detection Research Network \(EDRN\)](#) and the Center for Proteomics will develop initiatives to identify markers for early detection of pancreatic cancer.
 8. **Drug Development:** The NCI will expand the [Rapid Access to Intervention Development \(RAID\)](#) Program in response to high demand.
 9. **Patient and Provider Education:** The NCI will work with advocacy groups to promote education materials and information on the World Wide Web.
 10. **Palliative Care and End of Life:** The NCI will use the [Centers of Excellence in Cancer Communications](#) to expand research on palliative care and end of life. NCI is also exploring a variety of ways to enhance its support for palliative care research; further details will be announced when planning is completed.

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